



MOUNT HAWTHORN PRIMARY SCHOOL

TOGETHER TOWARDS THE FUTURE

PARENT COMMUNICATION CHARTER

Updated January 2018

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At Mount Hawthorn Primary School, we believe that education is a partnership between our team of professional educators and a child's most important teachers — their parents. When parents and school staff share information, model respect and give consistent messages, children are inspired to grow, learn and achieve their full potential.

This charter outlines the standards that Mount Hawthorn Primary School expects from all staff when communicating with parents. It also outlines the most appropriate and effective methods for parents to communicate with the school.

Respectful, open and timely communication is at the heart of the parent-school relationship. The protocols in this charter will ensure that all community members work together in a positive and respectful manner to ensure the growth and learning of all students.

What parents can expect:

- Regular communication from the school (e.g. fortnightly electronic newsletters);
- Scheduled opportunities to meet with the classroom teacher (e.g. classroom meetings);
- Other opportunities to meet with the teacher by appointment;
- Updates about important developments in the child's class (e.g. excursions, student teachers etc);
- Notification of any serious single issue or ongoing issues concerning your child;
- Opportunities to provide feedback (e.g. through confidential surveys);
- Parent communications acknowledged within one working day and responded to within two working days. Many of the teachers at Mount Hawthorn PS will exceed these expectations, for example by maintaining a class blog or similar communication systems. However, these are the minimum expectations for all staff members; and
- Parent Liaison support through the approved channel of communication to support classroom organisation and outcomes.

What parents cannot expect

- School staff returning calls after work hours;
- Emails to be answered in the evenings or weekends; or
- Access to teachers' private phone numbers or emails.

When should you contact your child's teacher?

- Changes in family circumstances;
- Medical issues that change or arise;
- Safety issues or changes in behaviour at home;
- If you have concerns about your child's academic or social progress;
- When you can't keep a scheduled appointment;
- When homework takes much more time than expected, or your child is unable to do most of the homework independently; or
- If your child has head lice or a contagious disease.

What information should be communicated to the school office?

- Absence due to sickness: Planned absences, (e.g. medical appointments). Please note that there is an approval process for holidays planned during term time;
- Any issues related to custody or access; and
- Changes in address or contact details.

When you have last minute information for the teacher:

- Speak to the teacher between 8:30am and 8:45am, (for messages less than two minutes); and
- Send a note; or call the office and leave a message for the teacher.

Communication that interferes with teaching and learning:

- Visiting the classroom during the teacher's preparation time before school or during the school day without an appointment;
- Speaking to the teacher disrespectfully or angrily, especially in front of your child or other students; and
- Talking to other parents rather than discussing issues directly with staff members. Remember that you are the model of how you want your child to communicate.

When is a face-to-face meeting appropriate?

Electronic communication, such as email, is highly convenient and can be used for short, non-urgent and positive forms of communication.

However, electronic communication is not appropriate for more complex or emotional situations. In these cases, parents should request a face-to-face interview so that your issues can be given the time and attention that they deserve. If in doubt, schedule a meeting.

When should I contact the Principal or Associate Principal?

For most discussions, the classroom teacher will be parents' first point of contact.

However, where conversations involve conflict, other families or dissatisfaction with any aspect of the school, members of the school leadership team (Principal and Associate Principals) must be involved. Either a staff member or a parent may request the involvement of the school leadership team at any time.

To increase mutual respect, remember:

- Teachers will make mistakes; they're human, too;
- Teachers have their own families and lives; respect their privacy;
- We're all on the same team - your child's support team;
- Take chats off site after drop-off so teachers and students can begin learning;
- Use age-appropriate language around children during drop-off and pick-up times;
- Recognise that we won't always agree, but we promise to listen; and
- Speak positively in front of your child.

Communication pathways at Mount Hawthorn Primary School

